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Canada

Market Promotion/ Competition

Canada Hopes to Finalize Pork Protocol with Argentina 1999

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Report Highlights:

Canada signed a pilot agreement with Argentina governing Canadian pork exports to that country in 1997. Canadian meat inspection officials hope to finalize the agreement during 1999. U.S. meat inspection officials are reportedly working toward a similar agreement.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ottawa[CA1], CA

Canada's pork industry is continually seeking new markets for its products. Market access in foreign markets can often depend on negotiated meat inspection protocols with meat inspection authorities of the destination country. Canada has negotiated a meat inspection protocol for Canadian pork to Argentina, which it hopes to finalize during 1999.

The following is a summary of the Canada/Argentina pork protocol as learned by the Office of Agricultural Affairs from Canada's meat inspection authorities and the Canadian pork trade. Interested parties should contact the USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service at (402) 221-7400 for additional information relating to the status of exporting U.S. pork to Argentina.

In late 1997, Canada signed a pilot agreement with Argentina governing Canadian pork exports to that country (see CA8009, page 7). The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) hopes to finalize the pork agreement this year. Under the protocol, Canadian pork must be frozen; it must be boneless; it must originate from certain establishments only (about 40 in number) and; it must be accompanied by certification that it is not irradiated (reportedly an Argentine "country requirement" not unique to the pork agreement). There is an additional restriction tied to the pH (acidity measure) of the meat. Within certain pH criteria, the Canadian pork can be sold without restriction in Argentina. Without the pH certification it can only go for further processing. This restriction is reportedly tied to the relationship of diseases such as Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS) and Transmissible Gastro Enteritis (TGE) to pH levels in pork. Freezing is a protection factor against many diseases such as trichinae (*Trichinella spiralis*), but CFIA officials claim there is no specific link between the freeze requirement in the protocol and trichinae since Canada has a trichinae control program in place. The CFIA therefore claims that individual inspection of each shipment for trichinae is not required under the protocol.

The following table shows total Canadian frozen pork exports and exports to Argentina from 1996 to the end of March, 1999.

Canadian Exports of Frozen Pork to Argentina; Product Weight		
Units: metric tons		
Year	Argentina	Total (all countries)
1996	0	110,862
1997	25	134,892
1998	1,777	124,258
1999 (Jan.-March)	134	33,785
Source: StatCan; TIERS, HS 0203.21; 0203.22; 0203.29		

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